

# LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN'S MEDIA 1

7/22/87. first version of "Feminist Documentary in Latin America. "

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I will begin by discussing some interconnections between international feminism and a new possibility that has arisen for media feminists worldwide to make personal and professional connections, especially now in Latin America. I have chosen three media makers (individuals and groups) and their works to look at in some detail. They and their films and tapes represent the possibilities most available to women artists in Latin America who want to make feminist media. Furthermore, their works are exemplary in terms of aesthetic quality and exploration of feminist concerns.

The media makers and works I am focusing on are Chilean exile, Valeria Sarmiento, and her feature-length documentary film, *A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN* (UN HOMBRE CUANDO ES HOMBRE); the Colombian feminist media collective, Ciné-Mujer, and their biographical documentary film, *CARMEN CARRASCAL*; and the Nicaraguan Taller Popular de Video "Timoteo Velasquez" (Video Workshop) of the Sandinista industrial workers trade union (CST) and the salaried farmworkers union (ATC) with their videotape, *LA DALIA*.

Valeria Sarmiento learned filmmaking at the University of Valparaiso during Chile's Popular Unity period and has made most of her films in exile in France. She has encountered constant problems with sexism in the film industry, both in Chile and in Europe. Her 66-minute documentary *A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN* exposes the oppression and cruelty to women inherent in the myth of romantic love. She interweaves sequences of interviews, mostly with men, with sequences of mariachis performing in an outdoor setting and images of Jorge Negrete, a film idol, from old Mexican films. Sarmiento says that in exile she can look at her Latin American experience with a synthetic overview and see in a new way Europe's influence on Latin American daily life and culture. She also feels that the distance allows her to express a critical perspective, especially about sexual politics. Stylistically, as an independent filmmaker working on the margins of the film industry in Europe, Sarmiento maintains an auteur's control over the subject matter and style of her works.

In contrast, both in subject matter and mode of production, Ciné-Mujer's film *CARMEN CARRASCAL* is similar to the documentaries made in the 70s in the United States in the context of the women's movement there. Ciné-Mujer is a women's filmmaking collective founded by professional women in the capital, Bogota, who wanted to find non-hierarchical ways of making films together and to create representative works which would take up important women's themes and be useful in organizing. Reflecting their feminist consciousness, they gave much thought to their personal and political relation with their subject, a farm woman living on the Atlantic coast of Colombia, and to the structuring of the film's script.

The third group includes women working within a video group, Taller Popular de Video, of the Sandinista trade union movement in Nicaragua. The group is a mixed men's and women's collective. Entering members learn videomaking skills there, usually one role (camera, sound, editing) according to the group's current needs. Periodically the group makes tapes specifically about women's lives and concerns, and often the principal speaker or "voice of authority" in their documentary videos is a woman. Building the Nicaraguan revolution is the Taller's main concern. Because the video makers come from poor families, and are oriented politically toward the working class and peasantry, their documentaries seem not just about but from the people filmed.

## INTERNATIONAL FEMINIST NETWORKING IN THE 1980s

At the time of writing this essay, July 1987, I am looking forward to an event that hopefully will mean greater availability of Latin American women's works here in the United States. It is the first meeting of Latin American women media makers and a festival of their works. October 1987, in fact, marks the date of three consecutive feminist meetings in Mexico City--the 4th biannual Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Meeting, the 1st Latin American and Caribbean Lesbian Meeting, and "Cocina de Imágenes"

(Image Kitchen), the feminist film/videomakers' gathering.

Building up to these meetings were a whole series of international feminist meetings and women's film festivals over the past two decades. The 1970s saw a flourishing of women's film festivals in Europe, Canada, and the United States. These led to personal encounters between women in the media and to the growth of feminist film criticism. Although many documentaries from the U.S. feminist movement were shown at such festivals in the United States, few were shown from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We did not know how much of that media existed, and little of it was distributed here.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 1981, Cinemien, a Dutch feminist film distributor supported financially by their government, received a grant to host the first International Women's Film Conference. Women film/videomakers, critics, and teachers were brought to Amsterdam, where they saw each others' and talked with each other in numerous workshops. It became clear that women film and videomakers could hardly speak of common needs and experiences because the institutional structures and material conditions under which women could make media varied so much from country to country. For example, in some countries, the main place to get training and raw stock to make a film was in a film school, but the procedure for making a film there varied from the school's giving the maker full artistic control to having a faculty board (male, patriarchal) control the process from script approval on. Many countries had government censoring boards, licensing procedures, or patriarchal financing policies that controlled a work before one even began production. At the final plenary session of that meeting, women from Mexico assumed responsibility for hosting the next such event with the date unspecified.

From 1980 to 1985, a series of feminist meetings drew together women from many countries, and the result was to reshape the very meaning of "women's movement," in the sense that on a global scale it now includes an anti-imperialist consciousness and corresponding political activism. Third world feminists have discussed the need for differing feminisms appropriate to varying cultural contexts, yet also the need to create networks for political action to combat the oppression of women worldwide. That oppression is seen as deriving as much from colonial and economic exploitation as from patriarchy, so that starvation and the policies of the World Bank are as much a feminist issue as population control and abortion. Within this context, it is useful here to note certain developments that occurred in these conferences over a period of time.

At the first Latin American and Caribbean and Feminist Meeting in Bogota in 1981, the women met in large plenaries rather than specialized workshops. In particular, the participants debated the use of the word "feminist" to define the meeting, and voted by a narrow margin to continue using the word and reclaim it from its bourgeois connotations.<sup>3</sup> They also decided that the next meeting in Lima in 1983 would emphasize diversity. Participants would come as individuals rather than as delegates of a group-- "so as not to decide by majority vote what the 'correct political line' is."<sup>4</sup> In Lima, in 1983, 600 women attended and there were 24 workshops, all organized around the theme of patriarchy. Participants themselves organized ad hoc workshops on lesbianism and racism. The latter was organized by Central American and Caribbean women, and the former, the workshop on lesbianism, drew over 300 women to it.

In their post-conference assessment, the Lima organizers saw the need for future conferences to develop action strategies for the Latin American women's movement. In this context, the 1985 Brazil meeting was planned as a place for ongoing feminist groups and collectives from each country to share their experiences. Both Cuban and Nicaraguan delegations attended the Brazil meeting, and the Nicaraguan delegation received a standing ovation, indicating unified support for that country's achievements in the area of women's rights and its strength in resisting direct U.S. aggression.

Most significant for both international feminism and for third world media women was the 1985 Nairobi Conference, closing the UN-sponsored Decade for Women. Over 14,000 women came to that conference. Most attended the more than thousand workshops sponsored by non-governmental organizations. The workshops had a unified sense of the urgent need for women's activism to counter all structures and institutions that harmed women. Acute national conflicts, such as those between Palestinian and Israeli women or those from Iran and Iraq, were vehemently aired but did not disrupt the conference as a whole. As Sundari Ravindran wrote for the ISIS Collective in Geneva,



We believe that the Forum at Nairobi has established beyond all doubt that the women's movement is at this point in time truly 'global' in character and not 'white-western' as some claim and would like to believe. All of us from the third world felt that the agenda truly reflected our priorities and many of the discussions were very relevant to third world problems. It was very clear also, from the very beginning, that there was a broad consensus among most of us that there were not separate "women's issues," .. but that all issues of oppression and exploitation concerned women and were therefore our issues."<sup>5</sup>

Film/videomakers were especially well represented at Nairobi with extensive showings of their work and discussion groups and workshops. There were 160 films and videotapes, mostly documentaries, shown at the Filmforum. A useful catalogue, giving a summary and production and distribution data for each work, was funded by the Canadian National Film Board and the Harbourfront film program of Toronto.<sup>6</sup> The media workshops of Filmforum, directed by Charlotte Bunch and Anita Anand, discussed using film/video as a tool for social change, producing media, and expanding distribution.

At the same time, an European-based international clearing house of women's movement information, ISIS, also ran a series of workshops on doing grass roots organizing with slide shows and edited-in-the-camera video. These workshops emphasized the need for the local groups and people filmed to have a clearly defined role in the production process, and they discussed the need to build regional networks and coproductions so as to use existing media resources more democratically. Founded in 1974 and publisher of ISIS International Women's Journal and a guide to women's audio-visual resources<sup>7</sup>, ISIS had built up a data bank on over a thousand women-made slide shows, films, and videos from around the world. The ISIS workshops were coordinated with those of the Filmforum, especially around issues of distribution.

The women media makers at the Nairobi conference stayed an extra two days to meet with each other and to build a more formalized network among third world film/video women. They came from fifteen countries, all outside the socialist block.<sup>8</sup> As a basis for further action, these women drew up a list of goals that echoed the 1980 UNESCO resolution on the need to restructure international communication. In that resolution for a New International Information Order (NIIO), UNESCO members demanded "respect for the right of the public, of ethnic and social groups, to have access to information sources and to participate actively in the production process."<sup>9</sup> Media makers outside the large capitalist networks of production and distribution articulated in this resolution what would be needed to establish more "democratic" and equitable media.

In the same vein, one of the concerns expressed by the film/video women at Nairobi was to facilitate new kinds of production and distribution networks, so that women in a region would get together and help each other make films, slide shows, and tapes. The women mandated that ISIS' already existing data bank on women's media be expanded by the self-conscious input of women media makers and distributors from the various regions of the world, and that ISIS insure the flow of this distribution information back to the regions. This would let a wide range of internationally produced women's media be made available on a regional basis, so that it could be used in education, consciousness raising and organizing.

The 1980 NIIO Resolution had stated that this long-needed communications revolution could never come about unless developing countries could increase their capacity to get equipment, train media makers, create a media production and distribution infrastructure, and make media suitable to their needs and aspirations. Such media, the NIIO Resolution stated, would respect each people's cultural identity and right to inform the world about their interests, aspirations, and values. Significantly, the Nairobi resolution made by the media women there understood that media-making skills often have a class basis and that production facilities are concentrated in the capital cities. The women insisted that training programs be developed for women in media production, distribution, and use; that indigenous productions be funded; and that all women's productions themselves should insure the representation of underrepresented groups (e.g., rural, disadvantaged, or indigenous people) at all levels -- planning, production, distribution, and exhibition.

Perhaps such goals will turn out to be utopian, but they reflect an awareness of what the previously "underrepresented" group could contribute as media makers. Parminder Vir, a British/Indian producer who participated in this conference and later organized a large showing of third world women's film/video at the 1986 Filmotav Indian Film Festival, put it this way. Third world women media makers want the chance to put up on the screen some crucial themes which their progressive brothers, the male filmmakers, often pass by. These include seeing women as the creators of revolution; women's escaping enslavement to family duties and traditional roles; women's marginality as it is related to other forms of marginality; and women's view of racial issues, especially the relation between color and status. Furthermore, third world women media makers want to take up issues, in their own terms, already broached by feminists internationally in the arts -- the depiction of sexuality, the very use of the female figure, and third world women's memory, power, and discourse.<sup>10</sup>

In all, these discussions did not emphasize feature filmmaking and the need for women to break into big international distribution markets. Rather, the women emphasized activism, building an understanding of women's unique and similar experiences internationally, and returning women's media "back home" to build grass-roots organizing efforts. These gathered media makers expressed their interest in both documentary film and video and in the representation and the social interpretation of ordinary women's lives.

Later, many Latin American women film and video makers met in a series of meetings at the Havana International Film Festival, December, 1986. At that meeting, the women criticized the sexism in national structures of media production, limiting the kinds of training and jobs women could get as well as their opportunities to make films and videotapes. The women also dealt with more speculative concerns, such as sexual representation -- both in the specific sense of explicitly depicting sexuality and in the sense of gender representation and overturning clichéd depictions of women.<sup>11</sup> Many media women from socialist countries were in attendance here.

## **MODES OF PRODUCTION: VALERIA SARMIENTO -- INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER IN EXILE -- "THE IMAGE THAT I NEED TO SHOW"**

Valeria Sarmiento: I think that it (my work) searches for a personal language and that to the degree that I keep making films, I'll clarify that language more and more, so as to reveal a world that is not obvious. All my films invoke a different kind of vision, but one based on elements from daily life. After seeing A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN, no one can fail to recognize that this is an everyday phenomenon. The small details that keep accumulating form a threatening whole. ...

Zuzana Pick: How do you see the problem of creating in exile?

Valeria Sarmiento: I think that we never cut loose of our Latin American experience; all my projects derive from my experiences there and in Europe. ... Now that I have the distance, I can reflect on what it means to be a Latin American. Europe has given me the chance to develop as an artist because it has given me the technical means to work in film. I could not have done it [these kinds of films] in Chile because people could only accept an image of themselves that was pleasing. Europe lets me put forth the image of Latin life that I must show.<sup>12</sup>

Valeria Sarmiento learned filmmaking during Chile's Popular Unity period but she could not get funding to do a film about women's condition; she faced both poor working conditions technically and tremendous sexism in the film industry, even among socialists. In 1972 in Chile she did make a twenty minute, black and white documentary film with her own resources. It was UN MUNDO COMO DE COLORES about two strippers at the Bim Bam Bun club:

"I have a scene in which the first stripper, who lives in a slum, says with great pride that, thanks to her work, she bought a refrigerator and a dining room set. Really, the film deals with the ambiguity in which the dancers live, selling themselves as sex objects and then buying some liberty



because of that. "13

The film was shown privately and not received very well because it did not seem to be about the political process Chile was going through. In a similar vein, Sarmiento's first film made in France in exile analyzed the consciousness of the bourgeois women of the pots and pans, that is, middle class women whose fears the right wing could manipulate so that these women would demonstrate against the Allende government. Called LA FEMME AU FOYER (THE HOUSEWIFE) Sarmiento's film presented a claustrophobic mixture of a day in the life of a housewife intercut with documentary footage of bourgeois women saluting the planes that came to bomb Santiago. At this time, most of the other filmmakers from Chile were making solidarity media that condemned the military and they rejected Sarmiento's second film. Again with the same knack for revealing political contradictions, Sarmiento made several films about Chilean exiles in France. In LA MAL DU PAYS (THE BAD THING ABOUT THIS COUNTRY), for example, exiled working-class Chilean children, aged five to eight, who had just arrived from the Santiago slums, say they would like to return home but to a house like they have now in France. As Sarmiento put it, "These children already had such a strange memory of Chile. ... Some had a vision of French comforts and wanted to hang on to them."14

In France, Sarmiento found work only as a film editor. This was partly due to the fact that the French industry (and governmental system of pre-production loans) classifies filmmakers as either editors and directors, and it was also due to the fact that she is married to film director Raul Ruiz. Funders either thought her work would be derivative of Ruiz's or that he, not she, deserved funding. She has talked about her economic difficulties in exile, working to put food on the table, and keeping on in production as an editor so as constantly to refine her filmmaking skills.

In terms of the production for A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN, French producers would not back it because Sarmiento was Ruiz's wife, but a German tv producer would. She filmed in Costa Rica partly because she saw her theme as a Latin American one and not specific to any one country, and partly because that was the only country in Latin American where she could get a visa to film at the time she was financially ready to do so.

After the film was shown on French television, the Costa Rican government protested that she had shown their people unfairly, especially Costa Rican women. Such a blame-the-victim mentality can be seen in the letter the Costa Rican charge d'affaires in France wrote on embassy stationery to the director of French tv's Channel 2, which was printed in Le Monde. He wrote about the film,

"It is a defamatory campaign against Latin American women, especially Costa Rican women. In letting adolescents, prostitutes, and murders speak, the director presents an image of the Latin American woman as easy to conquer and as a sex object, without value, while men are presented as "macho."15

Speaking about that incident, Sarmiento commented that she was lucky she turned down Costa Rica's offer of a co-production. As she put it, if her film had been a co-production, "it would have been like my Chilean film, destroyed or locked up somewhere."16

## **EVERYDAY SEXISM EXPOSED: A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN**

A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN has an unique style. It has been received as either humorous or insulting. This derives from the wit of its construction. As Sarmiento put it, it is a "film de montage," that is, constructed in the editing. It intercuts mostly interviews about family life and notions of sexuality with two kinds of sequences that show how Latin popular culture has traditionally presented romantic love. Sometimes we see a complete performance of a romantic ballad, sung by a group of mariachis singing in a leafy environment. Other times we see black and white images of Jorge Negrete held on screen briefly and manipulated by repetition and brusque cutting on gesture. The editing here makes the actor's gestures of love and bravado seem foolish. The film uses montage to show progressively the more negative effects of the sexual double standard. Thus, the final interviews present, against a neutral

background, two genial fellows who tell us why they murdered their wives -- one because his wife taunted him with infidelity and the other because she insisted on working outside the home. In this sense, the mariachi music, with its lyrics and its sentimentality, takes on more and more significance. As Valeria Sarmiento puts it, the accumulation of details from everyday life gain a sinister meaning as the film progresses. The film has a narrative polish in which every element reflects the political and aesthetic control of a auteur's vision. It increases in irony and tension, so that the viewer is "misled" by the normality of the interviews and the lightheartedness of the music. The underlying structure finally seems informed by a woman's anger at the structures of romantic love and their devastating effect on Latin American women's lives.

As one watches the film, it seems that all the people interviewed reveal their frankest opinions. Two adolescent males each tell their sexual expectations and experiences. A young woman sitting in a living room compares the traits of Latin and European lovers, and she also tells how her family colludes with her brother when he brings successive women home to his mother and introduces each as his wife. A taxi driver who is the father of children by a number of women is interviewed as are three of his wives.

Audiences may vary as to the point where the interviews seem to present an outrageous kind of sexism. Opening sequences move from an extreme close-up of piercing a baby girl's ears (seemingly done by a grandmother's hands) to the sexism of schoolday experiences, where we see a teacher telling a sewing class how to do "invisible mending" so as to be able to repair daddy's suit when he burns a hole in it with a cigarette ash. That's when I first got angry. Later sequences interview two adolescent males, each filmed in a "normal" living room environment and each conventionally handsome -- they both talk about common sexual experiences that they and their friends have had, and what they want from a wife. From there, Sarmiento goes on to depict a 15-year old coming out party, where the girl's preparations are supervised by her women relatives, and we hear the possessive tone of her father's opening address as he warns the teenage boys to all be respectful young men. All of this uncomfortably reminded me of my own adolescence, when I first became aware of the double standard in all things romantic.

A later interview shows a taxi driver who drives the crew around as he talks about his sexual appetites -- literally it is an appetite, for he admonishes us that a man has to make a pass at a woman right away by using the following metaphor: "You have to eat the bread while it's hot, or otherwise you'll have a hell of a time sticking a tooth in." Sarmiento's tour-de-force is that she shows him with three of his wives, in their respective homes, and the furnishings indicate that he is a good provider, which all of the women say of him. The next-to-the-last two interviews show men filmed against outdoor, neutral backgrounds who each say that they are in prison for killing their wives. The first said his wife, who had taunted him with infidelity and whom he had tried to win back, served him on a china plate when he demanded that she bring him lunch, sarcastically treating him like a guest. "I was alterado," he said, meaning out of his mind with rage, and that was the event that caused him to kill her. The other describes the act of murder like this: His wife was going out to work, which he hated, and he told her he would support her. "I don't care," she said. That's why I killed her."

The final interview, to which Sarmiento attaches the significance of unconscious incest,<sup>17</sup> is with a pharmacist, a genial older fellow, who says that what he wants is a woman who will appreciate the aesthetically finer things, like his cello playing, and say, "What is that beautiful piece? You play it so well. Please play it again." He says that is what his daughter, a single woman, does for him, and that is how a woman should live with a man.

Sarmiento had as crew two Chilean exiles, Leonardo de la Barra, cameraman, and Joachim Pinto, soundman. During the filming the people took the cameraman to be the director, and Sarmiento let it stand like that. She found that people liked to talk openly to strangers, especially when asked about sex and love. Furthermore, her crew thought that the film was to be about romantic love, rather than an angry attack on the machismo behind that ideology. Sarmiento does not say in the film that the country is Costa Rica and is sure that she could have filmed anywhere in Latin America, because she sees the same kind of sexism everywhere.

Those Latin American machos are very romantic, and the more macho they are, the more romantic



they are.<sup>18</sup>

A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN is mostly about men. ... I had to demonstrate who those characters were, very attractive and simpatico men, and that there is a whole folklore around machismo that is very popular, too. In our popular film tradition, stars like Jorge Negrete project that image--that is to say, there's a whole process of conditioning.<sup>19</sup>

I did not hinder people from expressing themselves and I did not twist their testimony. That is why I never put a commentary over documents I have collected.<sup>20</sup>

I never thought you can change people with a film. You can only show a situation, leaving people free to think about it or not. Of course, I use editing to select certain material and I choose how to organize it, so I present my thoughts and speak my mind, but without imposing it. I refuse to use any kind of explicit narrative voice. ... Every time I have shown this film, I have had problems. In France I have had to defend it among the Latin Americans in exile. They want political films. People on the left never want to pose the problem of sexism except as an "internal issue" or "after the Revolution." Now I think that you have to take up the issue beforehand because if not, afterward, you'll always have it around."<sup>21</sup>

Because she is living in Europe, Valeria Sarmiento has the economic opportunity to make "thrifty" independent cinema -- like many independent media artists in the United States and Europe. She received 100,000 DM to make the film and that was for all production expenses from paying for a crew to traveling to Latin America to making final prints. The film was shown uncut on German tv, cut on French tv, and has 16mm distribution in the United States and France. In the United States it is a feminist distribution company, Women Make Movies, that carries the film.<sup>22</sup>

Sarmiento has also adopted a mode of production common to many independents. She prefers an artisanal, self-directed work process, often one in which the artist understands politically the need to create a new film/video language to take on new or previously unexplored social and personal themes. (It is a mode that I and many of my women media friends also work in, and the one that I prefer as I make political video here in Chicago in 1987.) Sarmiento has inherited a cultural tradition of the outsider and artist from 19th century Romanticism, especially in the way that she insists on exploring and presenting the "darker" contradictions that mainstream culture ignores. Following in a similar vein, Sarmiento's project after A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN is OUR MARRIAGE, a feature fiction in which a man marries his adopted daughter after his wife dies; the film's plot draws out the implications of incest inherent in the Spanish equivalents of the Harlequin novels, and also the incestuous aspect of that patriarchal social tradition so common in Mediterranean and South American countries -- i.e., that a man marry a woman much younger than himself. Sarmiento's work cloaks rage in an elegant style. As she says about the reception of A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN, when a macho viewer recognizes himself in that film, he responds, "Sure, we're that way. So what?" On the other hand, women viewers are often led to question the entire process of social conditioning, especially the romantic conventions found in popular culture which they so dearly enjoy, and to understand that this conditioning literally embeds them in the structures of their own oppression.<sup>23</sup>

## **CINE-MUJER -- WOMEN'S MOVEMENT PRODUCTION PROCESS AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT FILMS**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, many radical 16 mm film production groups in the United States attempted to incorporate principles of skill-sharing and non-hierarchical, collective scripting, filming, and editing. Many times this came about as a response to women's organized demand -- to learn to do camera work, to take directorial control, to make films explicitly from a woman's point of view. Few groups still work like this. Members of those groups sometimes dropped out of filmmaking, or sometime the group got a slightly larger budget to do a more ambitious, more commercially viable project -- the production of which had to be organized hierarchically because of economic and time constraints. Political arguments do hold

up production, and irrevocable aesthetic and political choices must always be made, especially at the editing stage of a film or videotape. Furthermore, if the group gets enough funding to buy cameras and editing equipment, to rent office space and hire a staff, and to try to distribute films/tapes nationally or internationally, it becomes a small business. And as with apolitical small businesses, it faces the same dilemma they do: to incorporate principles of managerial efficiency or fold.

Ciné-Mujer's history runs parallel to that of many such groups in the United States. For one or two productions, the group functioned in an utopian way -- making a work in which the politics and aesthetics of the piece were discussed and decided collectively at every stage of the production. CARMEN CARRASCAL is a film conceived of as important for the "movement" as a whole, and it is a work in which the collective shared both skills and economic resources.

The film is a documentary both typical of and useful within the women's movement. It is a biographical treatment in which a woman whose voice is otherwise culturally underrepresented tells the "womanly aspect" of her life.<sup>24</sup> It depicts the life and craft of a rural artisan, Carmen Carrascal, with whom the crew obviously had great personal rapport. The filmmakers found an appropriate aesthetic form to deal with key social and personal issues -- the emotional tensions in Carrascal's life, the relation of rural people to the capital and to the national government, and rural women's sources of income, power and independence. It is also a homage from media artists in the capital to a peasant artist -- for the film shows Carrascal's process of basket making from start to finish, with her giving explanations about what is involved in her craft.

In their early projects, Ciné-Mujer did slide shows and short films on typical feminist issues-- abortion, maids, the image of women in advertising. Over a period of two years, its four to six members struggled to find ways of working together collectively -- not only in terms of filmmaking but in rotating administrative, public relations, and fundraising chores. The same two years were spent on developing the script of CARMEN CARRASCAL.

We worked for two years on the script in every possible way. We had the whole script on cards and used to play, like playing cards, trying out every possibility until we finally came to what the film is.<sup>25</sup>

Ciné-Mujer received a substantial grant to make CARMEN CARRASCAL, and their budget allowed them to take that money which would have been required to rent equipment in Bogota and fly to New York and buy used editing equipment and a tape recorder there. Similarly, it was cheaper to buy film stock in the United States, smuggle it out for processing, and then bring it back for editing. But that meant that everything had to be filmed all at once. To make the film, members of Ciné-Mujer went to the Atlantic coast to Carrascal's farm to be with her in her own environment. They took still photos and recorded audio interviews with her. It was during that time that they began to develop an aesthetic for the film and a way of relating to her personally. They wanted to respect her time and her space. During the editing stage, it was impossible to bring Carrascal to Bogota for consultation, but she liked the final version that she saw in her village by means of a Betamax half-inch video cassette, now a major mode of media distribution in third world rural areas.

Ciné-Mujer's early projects gave two of its members, Sara Bright and Eulalia Carrizosa, the chance to become professional filmmakers, although marginally. The editing equipment the group bought allows the collective a source of income. Because of the cost of maintaining the equipment and the difficulty of getting spare parts, these women do not train other women, even though they understand the value of having short courses for women only. They acknowledge the class and race privilege at work in their ascent to filmmaking. Now the group is financially self-supporting with money gained from distribution, renting equipment, and doing productions. Sometimes they can even pay themselves low wages but still have to work at other jobs.

The makers of CARMEN CARRASCAL both identified with their subject and respected her uniqueness. In particular, they gave cinematic space in the film for and social respect to Carrascal's madness. She had achieved a national prize for her basketry, awarded to her in Bogota by the President



of Colombia. But when she returned home, her award was disdained by her husband and her life went on just as before. She became mentally disturbed for about three months. She sang a song at that time about her condition which the filmmakers taped. That song brackets the opening and close of the film. Furthermore, she speaks openly in the film about marital tensions. She came into conflict with her husband when she insisted on the children's going to school. Now she makes baskets so as to provide an education for her children, who live in a distant town to go to school. Such stories of domestic anxiety evoke a common denominator of women's experience that many women viewers can identify with across national lines.

Furthermore, Ciné-Mujer offers a close look at a rural woman's daily labor -- the time consuming tasks of cooking over an open fire and preparing and making tortillas. Carrascal is shown to have an extraordinarily tender relation with her children, and as she takes on the responsibility of animal husbandry, she raises a calf and speaks about her mule as if they were children, too. One sequence begins with a close-up of Carrascal's hands in food preparation; as the camera zooms back, we see her pouring milk into a bottle and putting on the nipple. She calls her little boy. The next shot shows the small boy feeding a calf with that bottle, and there is a small surprise here since it seemed as if the bottle were intended for him. In a later series of shots we see Carrascal riding her mule to town to see her children, take them provisions, and sell baskets. She says the journey will last on into the night and many men would fear that. But she trusts her old mule "who is like a daughter" to her.

Women's farm labor is often under-represented in national agricultural reports because women's unpaid family labor is not quantified or accounted for.<sup>26</sup> In particular, women often take on the unpaid chore of animal husbandry. In most rural or small town areas throughout the world, women make an important contribution to nutrition and/or cash income by raising a pig or chickens, or by keeping a cow or goats for milk.

The Carrascals have land and a number of cattle, so that even though their lives look poor, they are not part of the landless, migrant, rural work force, especially where large multinational agricultural farms have dominated, and increasingly dominate, the rural economy. In those cases, especially if the soil is poor or there are a lot of children and the oldest son inherits what little land remains in the family, there is a lot of male migration-- with the men going to the capital to look for work (and often starting another family there). Woman-headed households increasingly do the world's subsistence farming that feeds the dependants at home

Carmen Carrascal suffers from her husband's lack of understanding, but in depicting her life, Ciné-Mujer has chosen to analyze a culturally stable way of rural life. Often in such families, when women can generate an income, either by a craft such as Carrascal does, or by selling products locally, they can control more of the family's spending money. If there is any, it is often used to provide better nutrition, education, or medical care for the children. A small amount of cash in the house allows a little margin for risk-taking and imagining alternatives beyond subsistence farming. In Carrascal's case, the alternative she insists on is education for the children.

Carrascal and her husband argued about her going off to the local market to sell baskets, that is, to leave the domestic sphere. As she has sold her baskets, she has encountered and understood the operation of national barriers to rural progress. She has to pay increasingly high transportation costs to get her baskets to the the government craft store, with whom she has a contract (but not a salary, as she would prefer). And the government supports rural crafts but pays a very low price for the goods that will be resold to tourists.

Carrascal has empowered the people in town because she has taught many, especially the women in two extended families, how to make baskets. She also taught it to her daughters. She invented this process for making and decorating baskets, and she says that if her daughters do not like to do that, they can invent a craft of their own. It is clear that Ciné-Mujer respected Carrascal's genius and also her typicality, for she represents a hope that many rural women have. Rural women need to use their labor so as to bring in some income which their unpaid labor at home does not generate. Their incentive is often to better their children's lives.

It is in this sense that I say that Ciné-Mujer made, on the basis of a political analysis, a women's movement film. CARMEN CARRASCAL looks at social structures and how they can gradually change to improve rural women's lives. It sees the relation between a rural woman's earning a cash income and her social growth and personal self esteem. And it does this by affirming the value of currently existing social structures that exist outside the mores of consumer-oriented family life found in the capital.

As Angela Davis brought to our attention in her ground-breaking essay, "The Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," such social structures have the potential for being the locus of revolutionary political organizing.<sup>27</sup> They also have to be looked at closely for the way they structure women's lives and women's potential for growth. Among land reform programs, for example, only in Nicaragua have women not had to be heads of households to receive land.<sup>28</sup> In many areas, the consequence of social isolation, especially for rural women, is illiteracy, lack of knowledge about health and nutrition, and political powerlessness. CARMEN CARRASCAL presents both the strength of its protagonist and of her bonds to her children and fellow basket makers, but it does not romanticize rural life or present it sentimentally. Therein lies the film's usefulness to the women's movement internationally.

In a sense CARMEN CARRASCAL represents in its production both a dilemma and a partial solution to that dilemma. The dilemma is the relation between artists and intellectuals in an urban area and rural peoples, whose lives, concerns and points of view cry out for public expression. The solution, as suggested by the women at the Nairobi Filmforum, may lie in coproductions, at least for the short term.

## **TALLER POPULAR DE VIDEO: REVOLUTIONARY VIDEO ON A SHOESTRING**

The Taller Popular de Video originally began in 1980 as a super8 film workshop established with UNESCO funds in Nicaragua. Its goal was to teach members of the Central Sandinista de Trabajadores (the industrial workers union) and the Asociacion de Trabajadores del Campo (the salaried farm workers union) how to make super8 films that would depict the lives, needs, and organizing efforts of the working class. Because super8 film stock is a Kodak monopoly and had to be processed in either Panama or Mexico (and paid for in hard currency), the group always faced a six to eight week delay between shooting and editing. After editing the footage, they then had only their original copy to exhibit. A Dutch foundation and a foreign filmmaking group in Managua, Tercer Cine, provided the Taller the facilities and training to make 3/4" video, and this is the format in which they have continued to work.

Their facilities are rudimentary. They have a portapak, a camera (in 1984 they got an used three-tube camera), a cuts-only editing system, and a cassette audio deck and record player to lay in a musical background in their sound tracks. Solidarity workers have provided occasional blank (used) U-Matic tapes, batteries for the camera, and a small four-track Radio Shack sound mixer, but the group still works without a waveform monitor, character generator, sound equalizer, or time-base corrector. All their tapes except their edited masters are recycled over and over. Often when a cameraperson goes out on a shoot, s/he is given two twenty-minute cassettes for the shoot -- the ration for the day. There is a Sony repair shop in Managua (the U.S. economic boycott is another obvious reason to switch away from super8); and the bill for repairs comes back with a part due in cordovas, the national currency, and a part due in dollars, spent on getting spare parts. To maintain their equipment, the group has to bring in a certain number of jobs that can pay in hard currency, and they usually get several contracts a year from European television or solidarity groups. The Sandinista labor unions themselves could not support an arts project that needed dollars to survive.

There are usually four to six people working in the group. Some have come from the skilled trades (a baker, a grinder of optical lenses, a secretary); some have come from the ranks of grass roots union organizers. None went to college. Two or three have organized trade union or Sandinista youth theater groups.

In November 1981 I spent a month in Managua teaching the group. We worked mostly on super8 editing skills. I myself was doing interviews and shooting slides for a slide show (later a videotape), LAS



NICAS, about women and daily life in Nicaragua. Following up on our discussions in common, in 1982 the Taller completed a video project on Nicaraguan women, LAS MUJERES. Later, at a collective farm called La Dalia, the Taller did a short biographical videotape about a woman militia trainer there. And in 1985, following the first congress of farm union women, the group did a tape on women in agriculture, focusing on the gains made for women in the union women, the persistence of the double day of work in the fields and at home, the contra attacks on farms, and women's doing extra labor and learning new work skills so as to supplant the production ordinarily done by the men now at the front.

The women who worked on these tapes include Amina Luna, Miriam Carrero, and Fani Ortiz. But the aesthetics and politics of the tapes are similar from one Taller production to another, and the style of the tapes that concentrate on women's lives cannot here be attributed to women media makers' unique chance to finally do a "woman's subject." The camera eye, an emphasis on ordinary people's political wisdom, and an exposition of the gains in workers' lives -- all these characterize the Taller's work. In general, the group has a consensus on the political issues and kinds of complexities to be dealt with in a tape, and they most often take their cue from the people whom they talk to and film. In general, since the beginning of the revolution in 1979, Nicaragua's mass media, especially video and television, have presented an increasingly complex and textured view of Nicaraguan women's concerns. By the time the issue of abortion was debated during the drafting of the Nicaraguan constitution, televised debates showed the whole range of women's opinions about sexual politics.<sup>29</sup>

What is characteristic of the Taller's work, and was visible in their earliest super8 films, is that they see working class and rural life as the source of the Nicaraguan revolution. People whom film viewers or onlookers from abroad might see as merely "poor" become sophisticated analysts of the current political situation in the Taller's tapes. The members of the Taller and the people whom they give voice to are what Antonio Gramsci called "organic intellectuals," that is, poor people who develop a keen insight into and analysis of their own situation in the course of political activism. The Nicaraguan revolution is full of such people, and they are always the subject of the Taller's tapes.

This video workshop works within a union framework, and the videomakers all agree about the importance of the Sandinista union movement as a way of empowering the working class through organization. Their tapes are usually analytic and synthesize a number of points of view, expressed in interviews, about a given situation. Biographical portraits that focus on one person are rarely found in their work, and they do not examine interior emotional life at any great length. LA DALIA is unusual in focusing on just one woman and her point of view. The interviews in the Taller's tapes have a *mise-en-scene* that conveys much about the life and especially about the work conditions of the person talking.

The tapes often emphasize work process, both as discussed by the people interviewed and in what the camera looks at. The narrative structure of the group's tapes seems en medias res, giving a sense that the revolution is an ongoing and ever changing affair, and this is what these people were doing at this time to build it. The contras' devastation is usually shown in terms of its impact on daily lives -- a destroyed day care center, the smoke coming off still burning rubble, or the unexploded but blackened oil tanks at Corinto that almost blew up when the U.S. mined the harbor and could have destroyed blocks of homes.

When I went to Nicaragua in 1981 to work with this group, I chose to do a project on women and revolution because I needed to know how it is that women's lives can change, what will change fast during a revolutionary period, and what changes more slowly (who does the housework, of course!). In fact, one of the most profound changes caused by the Nicaraguan revolution has been in the quality of women's lives. Some change specifically are aimed at women -- access to jobs and education, for example. Other gains such as literacy training, free health care, food rationing and regional food distribution, and free and compulsory education have drastically improved most women's lives by changing the quality of childrearing and family life. And women's massive participation in the militias, police, and armed forces mean that women bear arms and are crucial for national defense. This affects a whole society's perception of women, including women's own sense of their personal and social strength. Other developments are equally important. For example, in rural areas the farmworkers union established national work norms, naming each task and saying what quantity of labor at that task constitutes a day's work. This means that



men and women farmworkers always earn the same for a specified amount of work.

At this point, it is useful to go back and reconsider one of the demands called for by the women film/videomakers gathered at Nairobi. They called for indigenous or otherwise under-represented peoples to be represented at every stage of the production and distribution process. None of the filmmakers whose work I have described in this essay could do that. What would such representation mean. Does it mean giving cameras to the people? How will the editing occur? What is the process for developing an original media aesthetic with which to express new concerns? Does this demand mean doing or rejecting ethnographic studies of folk traditions and folk art? Does it include presenting both the isolated peoples and the international social and economic situation that impinges on their lives.

Nicaragua is a culture in constant change. The Taller makes tapes within a labor-union context knowing that the Sandinista government responds almost immediately to organized labor's demands. When grass-roots union organizers tell their constituencies, "To the degree that we are organized, we have political power," the workers have seen the FSLN's practice of responding to their union leadership. In that sense, the Taller's video is workers' video, and the issue of how to represent the under-represented is dealt with in a complex and responsible way.

## **LA DALIA: MOTHER IN ARMS**

Fani Bodilla was killed in a contra attack on the agricultural complex, LA DALIA, a few months after this video was made.

In the English-language version of this tape, these words appear over a frozen image of the young woman who had just told us about her life as a farmworkers' militia organizer. As I sat in Managua with members of the Taller in 1984 and they showed me their work, they said these same words often about someone who appeared before us on the tv screen. Death is ever present, but the vitality of these people's commitment survives in the Taller's tapes of them-- in the same way that the vitality of community and workplace organizing in Chile's Popular Unity period survives in Patricio Guzman's film, BATTLE OF CHILE. In this sense, the tape LA DALIA shows a woman living very much in the present; some of her activity conveys a sense of urgency and some, especially the details of childcare, seems timeless.

LA DALIA is a short 12 minute tape, made in 1983. Significantly the speaker's name is not the title but that of the farm. She is the "I" of the sound track and representative and both the farmers there and a whole new kind of rural woman. We see shots of her at home in a poor environment, in the corner of a room sitting on a bed and nursing her two month old girl, and in a cook shack. She is a thin woman with her hair pulled back in a bun from which wisps of hair escape and fall over her forehead. We see her family life, presumably as a single mother. Bracket sequences at the tape's beginning and end show her washing children in a stream by a waterfall; over that last sequence she says that she has big dreams for her girl, namely that the child will learn to read. Other times we see her serving her older girl a tortilla or bottle- feeding her baby, who is wrapped in a colorful new blanket.

Intercut are two sets of imagery which convey a whole range of changing circumstances in these farmers', especially farm women's, lives. In one set of shots, Fani Bodilla stands in her cook shed and talks to the camera at length. She is cleaning a rifle with a tin box of cleaning equipment on the table next to her, and a bench of scuffling children in the background. She, like many rural people, speaks of the starvation farmworkers had faced. She tells how the farmworkers' union won as one of its first demands that they receive an adequate, balanced diet on the farms where they work. She comments that after this regulation came into effect, the workers on her farm protested when their protein ration did not appear, and they rioted. She said she took a leadership role and calmed the men down by remonstrating, "What about before we had a union? Why didn't you scream then? You didn't get eggs at your meal today. When that happened before, none of you would dare speak up about it." They calmed down although they were emboldened by their contract to demand the food.

The combination of image and narration here signal a great change in poor, rural women's lives.



The cookshed now sees a rifle cleaned; the mother and cook is also responsible for defense, indeed, she organized the armed defense. Bodilla is a very slight, feminine woman; we notice her bracelet as she cleans the gun. But she is also a leader in the public life on her farm, with wisdom and a sense of history. As she cleans the gun or nurses her baby with a bottle of milk, she tells about how she formed the militia with one other man, and how the two of them kept watch before even having guns. Later she received training to become a militia instructor and returned to this farm but will wait till her baby is three months old before going back to that job.

Militia practice provides the other main set of images for the tape. Bodilla is not the instructor; another woman is. But Bodilla practices along with about twenty other people of all ages. The main camera movement is to track around the militia members giving close-up details of their heads, hands, and military gear, and then reveal in long shot the people in movement. Old men, a young woman wearing a flounced dress, Fani Bodilla wearing her uniform along with little red shoes, and people who have only frayed twine for a rifle sling -- all these line up for instruction. The woman in the dress takes aim on one knee, and then we see her lying flat on the ground for prone target practice and laughing in self-consciousness because of the presence of the camera.

At various points in the tape, a song comes up over images of the surrounding environment and the people on the farm. It is about the emotional life of being in the guerrilla, with a refrain of, "They live with the trees and the clouds, and recognize each other, and confront their own loneliness." This woman has experienced the loneliness of the organizer as well as her own experience when she was an adolescent fighting in the mountains. She has her work as a militia trainer and her role as a mother. The tape ends with a shot of her nursing the baby and her words:

I hope that all the things I dreamed of for myself will become this child's reality. I think that it is our children who will have a full sense of the revolution. Victory really belongs to them.

All the Nicaraguan women I talked to believe in the sacredness of motherhood, and the revolution reinforces that notion. But in LA DALIA we see how that ideology has shifted. It is no longer about mom at home. We see a woman without a man who is a military leader. She speaks as a mother when she talks about why she does what she does -- she sees herself as building the revolution for her children and for the generations to come.

## **CONCLUSION: INTERNATIONAL VIEWERSHIP**

All the women film/videomakers discussed here have as a specific goal expressing the community to itself -- be it the nation, the working class, or women. All these artists are also very aware of how dominant, capitalist media practices have shaped their viewers' expectations about what to expect from film and television, and these women want to retrain their viewers and overturn such expectations. Often third world women media makers deal explicitly with issues of sexual politics, especially rape, reproductive rights, and prostitution. They present the double day of salaried labor and housework imposed on women who work outside the home. Their works speak to women viewers across national boundaries because of women's responsibilities for domestic life and women's struggles to enter the public sphere on an equal footing with men.

It has been my experience showing these works to audiences in the United States that audiences here expect media with a middle-class bias and assume that images of middle class families in rich environments are and should be the norm. Third world media makers often prefer to show the poor organizing to take control over their own lives, extended family networks sharing resources, or many people living rich and complex lives in one small, sparsely furnished room. Such social relations and the imagery used to express them are unfamiliar to viewers here, and often speak best to black or latino audiences, who share the cohesiveness of the extended family, or immigrant viewers, whose families may have come from poor, minimally furnished homes. Furthermore, audiences receive these films differently according to different gender expectations. Rage at the double standard, sympathy for domestic madness, or seeing a relation between motherhood and bearing arms -- these may be responses which A MAN WHEN HE IS A MAN, CARMEN CARRASCAL, or LA DALIA were structured to elicit -- but they may

be more likely responses from women viewers than from men.

It is my opinion that the growth of third world women's media will coincide with the "video-cassette communications revolution" among progressive people's worldwide. All over the world, home video taping as well as playback of prerecorded tapes are providing a way to inform others about the struggles of the oppressed, as well as to build networks for activism. In the United States, the works described here as well as other radical documentaries from Latin America find distribution outlets most often within solidarity networks or in women's studies classes.<sup>30</sup> They are not a lucrative source of income for either distributor or maker. In some European countries, the works have been shown more widely on television. The videocassette revolution makes it possible for these works to have broad, inexpensive circulation. In Brazil, for example, there are over 350 grassroots video organizations who circulate each other's work.<sup>31</sup> In the United States, a radical satellite distribution project, Deep Dish TV, beamed up programs that were taped and broadcast by over 200 cable access stations, with the announcement at the beginning of each program to tape it and use it for free, as long as it was not for profit. "Show the tape till the oxide wears off." Because third world women's media would appeal mostly to poor and politically active women here, new ways have to be found to get the media to the audience who would most like to see it and would understand it and use it for consciousness raising and political action.

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<sup>1</sup>Forthcoming in Documentary Strategies: Focusing on Latin America, edited by Julianne Burton. Article, copyright 1987 Lesage.

<sup>2</sup>The word "here" referring to the United States indicates the intellectual limit of this article, that is, it is written from the outside. I speak Spanish and make video in Spanish, and am very concerned that these women's work be more widely seen in the United States. But even a critic from the United States who is tied to her subject by bonds of solidarity has a privilege to see films, travel, and publish in magazines and books that are read internationally, that third world women media makers often do not. The very notion of seeing, teaching, and studying third world films "here" has to be considered with the same suspicion we must feel as we use the tools and research of anthropology. Within that skeptical context and with the hope that this study will be of use to my sisters, I proceed.

<sup>3</sup>Lima Organizing Collective for the 2nd Meeting and ISIS Editorial Collective, ISIS International Woman's Journal, No.1, 1984, pp.3-4.

"The use of the word "feminist" to define the meeting was a political decision and the result of much discussion. ... Many women in Latin America are prejudiced against this word, which has been so distorted by male-dominated media and institutions. Some feminists felt that it would alienate women, especially the more marginalized ones. However, we have chosen to reclaim the term and identify ourselves as feminists. ... Certain political activists, in particular, felt that class struggle takes precedence over women's struggles. Other women also active in political parties did define themselves as feminists. All this brought out discussion about women's double oppression, the intertwining of class and gender oppression. One positive outcome of the meeting is that the feminist cause is becoming less alien and increasingly less frightening to the large number of women who passed from skepticism or ignorance to conviction after their encounter with feminism at the [Bogota] meeting."

<sup>4</sup>Lima Organizing Collective for 2nd Meeting and ISIS editorial collective, p.3.

<sup>5</sup>Sundari Ravindran, "Looking Forward from Nairobi," Women in Action (ISIS Women's Journal Supplement), No. 4 (December 1985), p.18.

<sup>6</sup>Harbourfront, 417 Queens Quay West, Suite 500, Toronto, Canada M5V 1A2, tel. (416) 863-9898.

<sup>7</sup>Women's Audiovisual Resources Databank solicits the following data about women's media (ISIS



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Audiovisual Project, Via Santa Maria dell'Anima 30; 00186 Rome, Italy): 1. description of your group or organization, with brief description of activities, address, phone, contact person; 2. description of film, video, or slide show with date, technical information, language, brief description, distribution information; 3. media women's assessment of their experiences to share with others, accompanied by articles and other documentation. From this data, ISIS has published a booklet--POWERFUL IMAGES--A WOMEN'S GUIDE TO AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES, 1986, and it solicits constantly new information.

<sup>8</sup>Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Egypt, Great Britain, India, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mali, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, United States.

<sup>9</sup> "The New World Information and Communication Order, Resolution

4/19 adopted by the 21st Session of UNESCO General Conference, Belgrade, 1980," NACLA Report, 16:4 (July-August 1982), p.32. This important document was often referred to by its initials, NWIO, but is now more frequently referred to as the New International Information Order, NIIO, to remove the connotation of "new world" as referring to the western hemisphere.

<sup>10</sup> Paraphrased from an unpublished document by Parminder Vir, "Black and Third World Women's Cinema," 1986.

<sup>11</sup> Deedee Halleck, "Women and the Media: The 1986 Havana Film Festival," Afterimage, 14:8 (March 1987).

<sup>12</sup> Zuzana M. Pick, unpublished interview with Valeria Sarmiento, 1985. Translation by Lesage.

<sup>13</sup>Pick interview.

<sup>14</sup> Pick interview.

<sup>15</sup>On Dec. 29, 1982, Le Monde published a long extract from that letter, dated Dec. 13, from Dr. Fabio Rosabal, Charge d'Affaires, written to the director of Channel 2, Pierre Desgraupes. It was reprinted in Positif No. 296, October 1985, in the article interviewing Sarmiento, "Entretien avec Valeria Sarmiento," by Françoise Audé.

<sup>16</sup> Pick interview.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with Audé.

<sup>18</sup>"Amérique Latine: les machos piégés par une caméra "invisible," Marie Claire, October 1982.

<sup>19</sup>Marcela Toro, "The Macho Man Exposed--in Costa Rica," Open City 1:4 (Montreal), April-May, 1984.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Pick

<sup>21</sup> Françoise Audé, "Entretien avec Valeria Sarmiento," Positif No 296, October 1985.

<sup>22</sup>Women Make Movies also distributes CARMEN CARRASCAL, along with a substantial number of films and videotapes made by Latin American media makers, in a series called "Punto de Vista Latina." Its director Debra Zimmerman participated in the conference of women media makers at the Nairobi Conference. 225 Lafayette Street, Suite 212, NY, NY 10012. (212) 925-0606.

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<sup>23</sup> Toro interview.

<sup>24</sup> Julia Lesage, "The Political Aesthetics of the Feminist Documentary," in 'Show Us Life'--Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Political Documentary, edited by Thomas Waugh (Scarecrow Press, 1984). In this essay I discuss the relation between the form of these documentaries and their relation to the women's movement.

<sup>25</sup> "From One Country to the Next: Sara Montgomery Interviews Colombian Filmmaker, Dora Ramirez," Screen, 26:3-4 (May-Aug, 1985), pp. 96-100. This is the major source of my information about the group's production process, along with "Les films de Sara," Interview with Sara Bright by Isabel Guisan, 24 Heures (Switzerland), May 27, 1982.

<sup>26</sup> "Women in Agriculture," World Survey of the Role of Women in Development, Report to the Secretary General, World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, Kenya, Nairobi, July 15-26, 1985. See also Lisa Leghorn and Katherine Parker, Women's Worth: Sexual Economics and the World of Women (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981). The statistics are outdated in the book but it provides a useful analysis of the interconnecting issues.

<sup>27</sup> Angela Davis, "The Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," The Black Scholar, December 1971.

<sup>28</sup> "Women in Agriculture," United Nations Document.

<sup>29</sup> One such meeting is available in an excerpt with English voice-over on half-inch video from XChange TV in the United States. WOMEN'S TOWN HALL MEETING (CABILDO DE MUJERES), XChange TV, PO Box 586, NY, NY 10009. (212) 260-6565. This group distributes many videotapes made in Nicaragua, including LA DALIA.

<sup>30</sup> One such program circulating in video is an extensive collection of excerpts from Latin American television and progressive groups' grass-roots video, Democracy in Communication. It is distributed as a package which can be programmed over several nights of screenings. (Democracy in Communication, 656 Carrol Street, Brooklyn NY 11215. 718/499-9524).

<sup>31</sup> Deedee Halleck, "The 1986 Havana Film Festival."